



TRINITY RIVER BOATING INFORMATION

Trinity River-Lewiston to Pigeon Point

This guide will describe the conditions typically seen on the Trinity River between Lewiston Lake and Pigeon Point (see map). River conditions can change daily so check the flows rate before you go and be aware that any of the conditions listed below have the potential to change as the river changes.

Character: Reliable flows, majestic mountain scenery, and ample gravel bar rapids attract paddlers to this reach of the Trinity River.

Location: 25 miles northwest of Redding. **Length:** 33 miles. **Class:** I to II. **Skill level:** Beginners with experience negotiating brush and rocks. **Optimum Flows:** 450 to 1,000 cfs at Lewiston or Douglas City gages. **Average Gradient:** 6 feet per mile. **Water Source:** Clair Engle (Trinity) Lake and Lewiston Lake. Best Seasons is summer and autumn. **Craft:** Whitewater, canoes, kayaks, inflatables, and rafts. **Hazards:** Brush along the stream banks and fallen trees are the primary concerns to the paddles. If implemented, new release schedules may dramatically increase late spring and early summer flows to the river. **Maps:** BLM 1/100,000 Redding, Shasta-Trinity National Forest map, USGS 7.5 Lewiston, Weaverville, and Junction City.

Overview: Near the fishing resort town of Lewiston, the Trinity emerges clear and cold from Clair Engle Lake and Lewiston Lake into a mountain valley. Soon the valley narrows and the Trinity looks like other famous fly fishing streams seen in flyfishing catalogs. Below Douglas City the river changes to a wide canyon surrounded by mountains. Boating difficulty remains consistent with class I and II rapids, gravel bars, brush hazards and fallen trees. Trinity County has an abundance of campgrounds. Steel Bridge, Douglas City and Junction City campgrounds are on the river. Downstream of Steiner Flat, you can choose your own unimproved site. Please follow the local fire restrictions and use proper restroom facilities while on the river.

Lewiston to Steel Bridge Campground

Length: 12 miles **Average run time:** 4-6 hours **Class:** II **Skill Level:** Advanced beginners **Elevation:** 1,800 feet **Average Gradient:** 13 feet per mile **Optimum flows:** 500 to 1,000 cfs at Lewiston or Douglas City gages.

The put-in is at the weir, only 1.0 mile below Lewiston dam and fish hatchery. The cold water dumps over the weir into a brief eddy that exits into a short rapid above and below Trinity Dam Blvd. Bridge. The narrow channel and frequent riffles in this section require attention. The splashy riffles continue over the spawning gravels near Lewiston. 0.8 mile downstream is the newly restored one lane Lewiston bridge, originally built in 1903. The north end of the bridge has a great put-in. Between the Lewiston and Rush Creek access the Trinity is a drift boater's dream. These 2.1 miles mix calm water and riffles, great for paddling and fly fishing.

The Rush Creek river access is on river right, at the bottom of the hill where the river and road diverge. The mouth of Rush Creek forms another riffle as the river turns south again to the private river crossing between Salt Flat and Goose Ranch. This area has several large gravel bars, riffles, and brushy banks. In the next 2 miles the river follows a long "U" turn to the northwest into a steep bank. Then the narrow channel turns south to the Bear Mountain Road Bridge with its parking area, fishing access and take-out. It is all readily visible from the river.

Below the bridge is an abrupt turn into a local fishing hole. Bear Mountain Road parallels the right bank for 1.1 miles before climbing up Trinity house gulch. A few houses and summer camps are scattered along the 6 miles from **Bucktail** to Steel Bridge.

Below Poker Bar, starting near Limekiln and China Gulches the BLM manages the land the next 2 miles to Steel Bridge Campground. Approaching Steel Bridge Campground the channel turns left around a gravel bar. The campground is slightly downstream on the left bank screened by trees - a good reason to look over the take-out when you set up the shuttle. There is no bridge at the campground, all that is left is an abutment below the day use area.

Steel Bridge Campground to Douglas City Campground

Length: 6.7 miles **Average run time:** 2-4 hours **Elevation:** 1,673 feet **Class:** II **Skill level:** Advance beginner **Average gradient:** 5 feet per mile **Optimum flows:** 450 to 1,000 cfs at Douglas City gage. Put-ins are easy at both the campground and day use area. The Trinity runs swiftly over a gravel lined bed. Tall trees shade much of the river's width and help to keep the clear water cold. At many river bends, trees have fallen into the river creating sweep hazards. About 1.5 miles below the put-in, the left channel (next to Steel Bridge Road) is so tree choked that it is usually impassable. The right side of the channel is typically clear. A short distance beyond, some large midstream rocks are easy to paddle around at low flows, but can provide turbulent swirling currents at high flows. Near the Highway 299 bridge at Douglas City the channel broadens with gravel bar riffles and more tree hazards. The left bank below the bridge is the site of Reading Bar, named after Major Reading who discovered gold here. A trailer park on the right bank signals your approach to a rapid with a little more spice, perhaps Class II. As the river starts its long "U" turn, it bends abruptly to the west. Gravel piles line the right banks. In river center, is a large rock. Logs can totally block the right side. Continuing to curve north, the river encounters another riffle marked by bedrock rising from the right bank. Fifty yards below the rapid is the take-out at BLM's Douglas City Campground. The picnic area and parking are on the river right.

Douglas City Campground to Junction City

Length: 14.5 miles **Average run time:** 4-7 hours **Elevation:** 1,640 feet **Class:** II **Skill Level:** Beginners with experience **Average gradient:** 16 feet per mile **Optimum flows:** 450-1,000 cfs at Lewiston or Douglas City gages.

The take-out for the previous run is the put-in for this run. Here the river begins to change character. The channel has cut deeper in the canyon and bed rock layers begin to appear. Most of the land between Douglas City Campground and Steiner Flat is public land managed by the BLM. From Douglas City campground the river turns to the west and then south. Several exposed ledges appear on the river left. The river seems remote from civilization but Steiner Flat Road hugs the right slope unobtrusively. Above the road, steep forested slopes drop down from high ridges. Gravel bar rapids occur less frequently. Deeper cut channels between rocks and high cut banks take their place. Fallen trees are still a challenge to avoid. Some rapids upstream of Steiner Flat are more technical than the rapids upstream of Douglas City.

A mile below Steiner Flat, a bouncy class II rapid begins and a gravel/sand bar on the right provides a welcome campsite. This camping area transitions between sand and gravel as the river flow changes. From here to Junction City the river is less difficult and boats make faster time. Wide gravel bars, suitable for camping, alternate from one side of the river to the other. The ridges are still steep and high, but are more set back from the river. Near Johnson Point, a large landslide, a remnant of hydraulic mining, scars a steep hillside on the river left. Soon the river makes two sharp turns. Between the turns, a gravel bar sends the flow into a high cut bank on the river right.

Starting near Johnson's Point, the land ownership is mixed private, USFS, and BLM all the way to Highway 299. Check with the Weaverville ranger station for information on gravel and sand flat camping. Seemingly incongruous among the long gravel and cobble bars, is a huge house and spacious lawns less than 0.5 mile below Johnson's Point. At Bell Gulch the river turns northeast to expose the first water level views of the 8,000 foot Trinity Alps, almost 20 miles away. A few more riffles, easy rapids and avoidable snags speckle the river as it flows in a valley once exploited by hydraulic mining and gold dredges.

Two roads, well set back from the river, parallel the last few miles: Sky Ranch Road on the east side and Dutch Creek Road on the west. Dutch Creek Road Bridge is almost 2 miles from the take-out. The next landmark is Canyon Creek with high gravel mounds at the mouth. During spring and early summer,

Canyon Creek contributes Trinity Alps snow melt to the river. Just beyond Canyon Creek, the river flows immediately next to Highway 299. The Trinity River swings south and forms a large loop back toward the highway. The gravel bar inside this loop (river right) is the take-out. If you paddled next to Highway 299 again, you went too far. Go back upstream to the gravel bar.

Junction City Campground to Bagdad River Access

Length: 13 miles **Average run time:** 3-6 hours **Elevation:** 1,485 feet **Class:** I to II **Skill Level:** Beginners with experience **Average gradient:** 12 feet per mile **Optimum flows:** 450-1,000 cfs at Lewiston or Douglas City gages.

The take-out for the previous run is the put-in for this run. Here the river begins to widen and slow in character. The channel is wider in this area of the canyon and the gravel river bottom is dominant. The water is relatively flat and passes through numerous gravel dredge piles lining the banks of the river. Much of the land between Junction City Campground and the Bagdad River Access is public land managed by the BLM. Due to the limited parking, don't park in the lower parking lot (next to the toilet). Park in the upper lot next to the Bagdad historical marker near the Highway 299 shoulder.

Bagdad River Access to Pigeon Point Campground

Length: .4 miles **Average run time:** ½ hour **Elevation:** 1320 feet **Class:** II **Skill Level:** Beginners with experience **Average gradient:** less than 5 feet **Optimum flows:** 450-1,000 cfs at Lewiston or Douglas City gages.

The take out for the previous run is the put-in for this run. The river passes the mouth of the North Fork of the Trinity River about 100 yards from the put-in. This area is a prep run for the lower whitewater sections. River guides use this section to instruct river runners and prepare them for the rest of the runs in the lower river. Due to the limited parking, don't park in the lower parking lot (next to the toilet). Park in the upper lot next to the Bagdad historical marker near the Highway 299 shoulder. Below pigeon Point are a series of class II and III rapids. It is not advised that inexperienced boaters continue beyond this point. For more information on this section of the river contact the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

Access Points:

Lewiston Gage and weir are just 0.1 mile upstream from Trinity Dam Blvd. Bridge. A gravel area just below the weir offers a short steep gravel ramp for boat launching. Trinity Dam Blvd. Exits north from Highway 299 about 27 miles west of Redding.

Old Lewiston Bridge connects Deadwood Road in Lewiston with Rush Creek Road along the north bank. The large gravel bar access is at the north end of the one land bridge on river right.

Rush Creek (Hog Hole) fishing access is west of both Trinity Dam Blvd. Bridge and the old Lewiston bridge. Go to the north side of the river and turn west onto Rush Creek Road. The graded gravel parking area is about 2.1 miles from Trinity Dam Blvd. Bridge.

Bucktail Hole fishing access-from Highway 299 go north on Old Lewiston Road for 3 miles to Browns Mountain Road. Turn onto Browns Mountain Road for 0.3 mile. Next to the bridge are easy parking and river access. Here the clear river is small, intimate, and very attractive. Upstream, the channel meanders into a cliff.

Steel Bridge Campground occupies the end of the Steel Bridge Road about 2 miles from Highway 299. The turnoff from Highway 299 is 3 miles east of Douglas City. You can easily launch your boat from the campground. Steel Bridge Campground is open year round (weather permitting). Steel Bridge day use area provides river side parking on a wide gravel bar 0.2 miles downstream of Steel Bridge Campground. Douglas City Campground and day use area is on Steiner Flat Road , 0.5 mile from downtown Douglas City and Highway 299. This fee area is open May 1-Nov 1(weather permitting).

Steiner Flat is public land that provides primitive camping at the end of Steiner Flat Road. Continue west and downstream along Steiner Flat Road from Douglas City and Douglas City Campground. The area is open year round (weather permitting).

Junction City access is on the opposite side of Highway 299 from junction City Campground, about 1 mile west of the Canyon Creek bridge. An unmarked gravel road is 50 feet east of campground entrance and leads to a large gravel bar with ample parking. Typical take out is on the west side of the bar. The fee campground provides potable water, toilets, tables and campsites open year round.

Shuttle: Lewiston to Steel Bridge Campground 15 miles, 30 minutes. Steel Bridge Campground to Douglas City Campground 6 miles, 20 minutes. Douglas City Campground to Junction City Campground 17 miles, 30 minutes.

For more information:

Bureau of Land Management

Redding Field Office

355 Hemsted Drive

Redding, CA 96002

530-224-2100

<http://www.ca.blm.gov/redding>.

Camping information, maps, and lists of permitted fishing guides and shuttle

Weaverville Ranger District

Shasta Trinity National Forest

P.O. Box 1190

210 Main Street

Weaverville, CA 96093

530-623-2121

<http://www.r5.pswfs.gov/shastatrinity>.

Information on the Trinity River from Pigeon Point to Burnt Ranch and camping on sand and gravel bars

Bureau of Reclamation

16349 Shasta Dam Boulevard

Shasta Lake, CA 96019

530-275-1554

<http://www.usbr.gov/>

stream flow information and dam release information